

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Final Office Action mailed December 19, 2005. In order to advance prosecution of this case, Applicant amends Claims 1, 3, 5, 14, 16, 18, and 33. Applicant also cancels Claims 2, 4, 15, and 17 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowed Claims

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's allowance of Claims 27-32. Applicant also notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 4-12 and 17-25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. As discussed below, Applicant amends Claims 1 and 14 to include elements of Claims 4 and 17, respectively, that the Examiner indicates would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Amended Claims 1 and 14 are thus allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indications.

Claim Objection

The Examiner objects to Claim 15 because the claim is allegedly unclear. Specifically, Claim 15 contains the phrase "repeat the steps. . .," and the Examiner contends it is unclear what steps are being referenced by this phrase. Although Applicant respectfully traverses this objection, for the purposes of expediting prosecution, Applicant cancels Claim 15, thereby obviating this objection. Applicant wishes to note that, with respect to all amendments and cancellations herein, Applicant reserves the right to pursue broader subject matter than that presently claimed through the filing of continuations and/or other related applications.

Section 102 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-3, 13-16, 26, and 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,841,461 issued to Yamamoto et al. ("Yamamoto"). Applicant amends Claims 1 and 14 to include elements of Claims 4 and 17, respectively, that the Examiner indicates would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1 and 14 are thus allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1 and 14, and their respective dependents.

Additionally, Applicant amends Claim 33 to include elements substantially similar to elements included in original Claims 4 and 17 that the Examiner indicates would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. As a result, amended Claim 33 is allowable in accordance with the Examiner's indications. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of Claim 33.

Conclusions

Applicant has made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicant respectfully requests full allowance of all pending Claims. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicant stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

No fees are believed to be due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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